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Water research grant awared to University of Montana School of Forestry

University of Montana--Missoula. Office of University Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MISSOULA - The Montana water problem moved a step closer to a potential solution today when University of Montana President Robert Johns announced receipt of a grant for further water research.

The matching-fund grant of $5,200 was awarded to the UM School of Forestry by the Washington, D.C., office of Water Resources Research under the Department of Interior.

Forestry Dean Arnold Bolle said the grant is for carrying out "a proposal to study hydrological data acquisition through remote reconnaissance systems."

He reported it was submitted for national competition by Fred L. Gerlach, assistant professor of forestry, and Darold E. Ward, graduate assistant in forestry. Gerlach and Ward will conduct the research.

Prof. Gerlach said the study will emphasize remote sensing techniques to acquire water resources information. Initially, the study will determine whether terrain features having surface moisture differences also have surface temperature differences and infrared radiation differences.

The research will attempt to correlate surface moisture content and temperature of soil areas with recorded differences in the intensity of infrared light radiated by the areas.

The grant is administered through the Water Resources Research Center in Bozeman. "The results of this study may lead to more rapid means of preparing moisture distribution maps and to more accurate location of water sources. In an area the size of Montana this would be important to the study and management of our water resources," Prof. Gerlach said.

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